

# Orientation Manual *for the* Academic Council

*A Shared Governance Entity*



**Connecticut State  
Colleges & Universities**

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***Dr. Jane McBride Gates, Provost***

**Academic and Student Affairs  
2021/2022**

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Connecticut State Colleges and Universities  
Academic and Student Affairs

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### The Academic Council

Please bookmark [this page](#) for direct access to information about the Academic Council, including membership, meeting and reporting schedules, policies and processes, as well as all relevant forms.

**Charge:** To advise the Board of Regents (BOR) via its Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASA) on academic policies and practices, and related issues.

The Academic Council (AC) is a formal, deliberative and collaborative body, operating in fashions to advance openness, communication and trust. Members recognize that their thoughtful deliberations often require study and reflection. Members' voices are respectfully heard and thoughtfully considered, even when their input is not reflected in final decisions. In maintaining its formality, the AC appreciates informal processes and interactions that often affect and/or reinforce its effectiveness.

The Academic Council considers and makes recommendations on all curricula related to the Academic units at institutions within the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU). All new programs, program alignment, program modification and program discontinuations fall within the purview of the Academic Council.

### Membership

Membership shall consist of the Chief Academic Officers (CAO) from each CSCU institution. The Vice President of Academic Affairs for the CSCU System is the convener and shall preside over council meetings. The CAO, or their designee, from each institution shall be the designated representative on matters requiring a vote of the council. Each institution shall receive one vote. The CAO may identify a designee to serve as institutional representative in their absence. A simple majority of voting members (or designees) will constitute a quorum.

## **Policy Formation**

The AC provides consultations to the Office of the Provost regarding the formation of academic policies for the BOR's consideration. The Provost might also consult the AC regarding procedures and processes to fulfill academic and other organizational policies. Additionally, each CAO might suggest an academic policy or process for the AC to explore, at the discretion of the Provost. A policy/process proposal initiated by the AC and approved by a majority vote will be submitted to the ASA for its consideration.

In executing its **Charge**, the AC is to be mindful of the BOR's Vision, Mission, and Goals:

**Vision:** The Connecticut State Colleges & Universities will continually increase the number of students completing personally and professionally rewarding academic programs.

**Mission:** The Connecticut State Colleges & Universities (CSCU) contribute to the creation of knowledge and the economic growth of the state of Connecticut by providing affordable, innovative, and rigorous programs. Our learning environments transform students and facilitate an ever increasing number of individuals to achieve their personal and career goals.

**Goals:**

1. A successful first year
2. Student success
3. Affordability and sustainability
4. Innovation and economic growth
5. Equity

Collectively and individually, each CAO nurtures institutional and system-wide cultures in pursuit of academic excellence and the continuous improvement of teaching and learning.

## **Meetings**

The Academic Council meets monthly during the months of August through June of each calendar year. All Council members will receive written notification of each meeting at least three weeks prior to the scheduled date and time unless immediate need prohibits such notification. The meeting agenda will be sent one week prior to the scheduled meeting.

To promote discussion of agenda items succinctly and informatively, enhance the organizational efficiency of the meeting, and to respect the value of everyone's time:

→All Academic Council meetings will begin promptly at 1:00 p.m. and end by 3:00 p.m.

→All items not discussed during the meeting timeframe will be moved to the next AC agenda as Unfinished Business.

→All proposals must be transmitted to the System Office at least two weeks prior to the Academic Council meeting date.

Meetings shall be open to others who may choose to attend including staff members invited by council members, additional staff from the University System Office, and invited guest speakers. Participation will be limited to council members and invited faculty/staff from the respective CSCU institutions. Others may participate at the discretion of and upon recognition by the Chair.

It is the responsibility of each member to be active on the Council and to attend scheduled meetings on a regular basis.

The Academic Council's recommendations, upon the approval of the Provost, will be transmitted to the Chair of the BOR Academic and Student Affairs Committee.

## **II. CSCU ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

### **The Board of Regents of Higher Education**

The Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education is the governing body for the state's 12 community colleges, four state universities, and the online/non-traditional college, collectively known as the Connecticut State Colleges & Universities (CSCU). The Board holds broad responsibilities for state policy for public higher education. Traditional, non-traditional, and online learners are represented by a student population numbering over 85,000 full-time and part-time students. The seventeen CSCU institutions award associate, bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees as well as undergraduate and graduate certificates. They provide affordable, accessible educational opportunities for Connecticut students of all ages. With campuses across the state and online, the institutions offer more than 1,200 degree and certificate programs in a range of disciplines and fields to help prepare and train the state's future workforce.

The Chairperson of the Board of Regents of Higher Education is appointed by the Governor. The Board of Regents has twenty-one members.

The twenty-one member Board of Regents for Higher Education serves as the governing body for the regional community-technical college system, the Connecticut State University System and Charter Oak State College pursuant to [Subsection \(a\) of Section 211 of PA 11-48](#). On January 1, 2012, the Board of Regents is also authorized to act, as necessary, as the Board of Trustees for the Community-Technical Colleges, the Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University System and the Board for State Academic Awards (which is the Board for Charter Oak State College) pursuant to sections [10a-71](#), [10a-88](#) and [10a-143](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended. The specific powers and duties of the Board are prescribed in [Title 10a of the Connecticut General Statutes](#) and are further delineated in policies adopted by the Board from time to time. Section [10a-1a](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes delineates the membership.

Among many responsibilities, the board sets statewide tuition and student fee policies; establishes financial aid policies; reviews, licenses, and accredits academic programs; and, in collaboration with institutional stakeholders, conducts searches for and selects campus presidents and chief executive officers. In addition to governance responsibilities, the board also holds broad responsibilities for development and coordination of statewide higher education policy.

## **Academic & Student Affairs Committee**

### **Introduction**

There is established a standing committee to be called the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR). This charter broadly defines the Committee's roles with respect to academic policies and standards, program approvals, and student affairs.

### **Membership**

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee shall be appointed by the Chair of the Board of Regents. It shall be composed of not less than five members of the Board of Regents. The Chair of the Faculty Advisory Committee shall serve as an ex-officio member. One Board member shall serve as Chair of the Committee.

### **General Purpose and Scope**

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee shall be a standing committee of the Board of Regents. It is charged with oversight of student affairs and system academic policy including, but not limited to, program approval, academic standards, and transfer policy.

### **Committee Responsibilities**

Actions that fall under the purview of the committee include, but are not limited to:

- a. Review and recommend to the full Board mission statements for the constituent units and role and scope statements for the individual institutions and campuses (CGS section [10a-1c](#) and section [10a-6\(7\)](#));
- b. Monitor and evaluate institutional effectiveness and viability in accordance with criteria established by the Board (CGS section [10a-6\(5\)](#));
- c. Develop criteria to ensure acceptable quality in programs and institutions and enforce standards through licensing and accreditation as well as periodic program review (CGS section [10a-6\(5\)](#));
- d. Approve and recommend to the full Board accreditation of institutions, licensing of new academic programs, modification of existing programs, and termination of programs (CGS section [10a-6\(8\)](#), [10a-35a](#), and the [Connecticut Regulations for Licensure and Accreditation of Institutions and Programs of Higher Learning](#));
- e. Recommend to the full Board approval of administrative units that focus on research and service activities—usually called centers or institutes, including centers of excellence ([CGS 10a-25j](#));

- f. Recommend to the full Board approval of new policies or amendment of existing policies governing academic and student life matters;
- g. Recommend to the full Board approval of honorary professorships and other special recognition of faculty, in conjunction with the Finance and Administration Committees when such honors carry a financial impact;
- h. Recommend to the full Board approving conferral of honorary degrees; and,
- i. Recommend to the full Board approval of promotion, tenure, and award of CSU Professor status, as recommended by Presidents.

### **Meetings**

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee shall meet as often as deemed necessary by the Committee Chair. An annual calendar will be established.

### **Staff to ASA Committee**

CSCU Chief Academic Officer [Provost]

### **The President of CSCU**

The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities of the Board of Regents and, as such, shall be empowered by and responsible to the Board for the prompt and effective execution of all policies adopted and directives issued by the Board for the order and operation of the CSCU and its institutions. The Board shall elect the President. Responsibilities of the President include the following:

- a. Bring recommendations for policies and initiatives to the Board of Regents;
- b. Build support, cooperation, and synergy among the system universities, colleges, and online college;
- c. Balance central authority with institutional differentiation and autonomy;
- d. Employ, supervise, and evaluate staff;
- e. Administer, coordinate, and manage Board of Regents' activities;
- f. Guide and implement the Board's agenda for governance and policy, including management of meetings and initiatives;
- g. Act as the Board of Regents' chief agent for development of budgets, strategic planning, and labor relations in a collective bargaining environment;
- h. Communicate fully and in an appropriate, timely manner with the Board of Regents;
- i. Create a collaborative environment to work with university and college presidents and chief academic officers;
- j. Develop on-going collaboration with public policy-makers; and
- k. Perform other related duties as may be required by the Board of Regents.

## **III. ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

The Board of Regents' Academic Program Review (APR) Policy requires all academic programs to undergo a comprehensive review and states that at a minimum, each degree and certificate granting program is

subject to review at least once every seven years. The APR is a critical assessment from both internal and external perspectives of the current status of academic programming. The APR is faculty-directed, collegial, data-driven, reflective and analytical.

CSCU institutions conduct APR for a number of reasons and for a variety of consequential proceedings. In their own constructions, the BOR expects institutions to establish policies, standards and procedures for APR to be fully compliant with NECHE *Standards for Accreditation* and the state's accountability reporting requirements. The BOR employs institutional reporting of the APR as a quality assurance mechanism. Accordingly, as the BOR's administrative arm, the CSCU System Office employs its APR summative reporting requirement as a mechanism for assurance of quality and evidence that results of the assessment process are utilized for curricular improvement and the enhancement of learning.

Academic programs in the CSCU System are numerous and the APR is voluminous. To provide APR information in a consistent and organized way, the staff in the Office of the System Provost have formatted a reporting form, (APR's End-of-Year (EOY) Report –“Quality Assurance Monitoring of Credential Programs”) embedded with review criteria indicative of the program's quality, viability and ongoing efforts to improve, through which institutions are to summarize the APR. All APR reporting forms can be found [here](#).

The EOY is to be submitted by the institution's chief academic officer (CAO) presenting those academic programs whose reviews were completed during that academic year by displaying or summarizing review elements specified in the EOY. System Provost staff is charged with examining the summative report and making recommendations to the governing body regarding its acceptance or rejection.

### **Scheduling Program Review** – See the Calendar of Submissions for specific dates

December: The institutions shall report their rosters of academic programs scheduled to be completed during the current academic year to the Office of the System's Provost utilizing APR Form 1.

January/

February: The System Office of the Provost will compile the institutional schedules into a single document and summarize information within a Staff Report for the consideration of the Board's Academic and Student Affairs (ASA) Committee.

February/

March: Following its consideration, the ASA will approve or not approve the consolidated schedule and submit its recommendation to the Board for its action.

February/

March: Accepting the ASA recommendation, the Board will ratify or not ratify the consolidated schedule.

**NOTE:** If the ASA and/or Board votes to not approve or ratify an institution's schedule or an element therein, the System Provost will: (a) inform the institution of the requirement to resubmit, and (b) establish a procedure and schedule for ASA/Board action.

### **Reporting Program Review**

June: To allow sufficient time for the CAO to review a program's formal APR report, to decide upon its acceptance or rejection, and to summarize the report within the System's EOY template, it is suggested that CSCU require the institutional APR is due in June.



August 15: The institutions shall report the results of the academic program reviews to the System Provost per the directions for the Academic Program Review End-of-Year Report - APR Form 2.

September: The System Office of the Provost will compile the institutional reports and summarize the principal elements within a Staff Report for the consideration of the ASA.

**NOTE:** If System Provost staff recommends that an EOY be rejected and the Provost concurs, the Provost shall inform the CAO and offer three options:

1. Withdraw the EOY and re-schedule its submission for the next academic year
2. Seek an appeal in the form of a review of the EOY by a three-member panel of randomly selected members of the CSCU Academic Council whose recommendation for acceptance or rejection is forwarded to the ASA
3. Go forward with the presentation of the SP recommendation with a request for a hearing prior to the ASA's decision with the understanding that the request might be denied

October: Following its consideration, the ASA will approve or not approve the consolidated report on institutional results of academic program reviews and submit its recommendations to the Board for its action, highlighting any questions or concerns. Particular institutional End-of-Year reports will be made available to the ASA for its review upon request of the System Provost.

**NOTE:** If the ASA forwards a recommendation to the BOR for rejection, it will be accompanied by a recommendation from the System Provost that the program's (state) accreditation be accorded probationary status for a two-year period and that the institution be required to submit a complete APR near the end of that timeline for the BOR's consideration.

October: Accepting the ASA recommendation(s), the Board will approve or not approve the consolidated report. If the Board has any questions or concerns, the ASA will be directed to conduct an inquiry of particular institutions and/or academic programs via the System Provost.

**NOTE:** If warranted, appropriate Board action will follow. Given the ongoing nature and the seven-year time span of the APR process, it might be appropriate that the BOR receive an interim report regarding progress-to-date on implementation of the institutional APR's action plan for continuous quality improvement.

### **Reporting Low Completers**

November: The institutions shall report on low completer program to the System Provost per the directions for the Academic Program Review End-of-Year Report - APR Form 2 - Low Completers.

December: The System Office of the Provost will compile the institutional reports and summarize the principal elements within a Staff Report for the consideration of the ASA. The ASA may require additional information or a subsequent report from institutions regarding identified Low Completers.

#### IV. TYPES OF ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is one process used by American higher education to assess and scrutinize the quality of institutions of higher education and their programs. There are basically three types of accreditation:

1. Regional or national accreditation of institutions
2. Professional accreditation of specific schools or programs by professional area-specific bodies
3. State approval through licensure and accreditation of their institutions to offer programs and confer degrees

*The policies and procedures of the AC and the ASA focus on the third type of accreditation.*

##### **1. Accreditation of Institutions:**

Institutions are generally accredited by either regional or national bodies. Institutional accreditation applies to the institution as a whole, not to individual programs or units within the institution. The United States Department of Education (USDOE) and Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) recognize certain accrediting organizations and accept those organizations as sufficient for institutional oversight. The USDOE recognizes accrediting organizations in accordance with federal law and regulations. Institutions must be accredited by an accrediting organization recognized by the USDOE in order to offer federal financial aid to students; those not accredited by a USDOE-recognized accreditor cannot participate in federal aid programs.

Regional higher education accrediting organizations in the United States generally assess and monitor institutions in their geographic area, though current federal regulations allow for accreditation of institutions from other regions. Nearly all are degree-granting and non-profit.

National accrediting organizations, on the other hand, accredit both degree-granting and non-degree-granting (career schools, for example) institutions. Additionally, many institutions with national accreditation are for-profit. National accreditors are not traditionally limited by geographic area, and have members spread across the country.

Regarding the transfer of credits, it is up to each institution to decide what to accept. However, as a general rule, regionally accredited institutions do not accept credits from nationally- or non-accredited institutions.

All 17 CSU institutions are regionally accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE).

##### **Regional Accreditation**

Institutional accreditation is granted by a regional accrediting agency within a scope of authority approved by the U.S. Department of Education. NECHE is the regional accreditation

agency for colleges and universities in the six New England states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Three institutions in Greece, three in Switzerland, two in Lebanon, and one in Bulgaria, Bermuda, and Morocco, respectively, are also affiliated with NECHE.

NECHE is one of seven regional higher education accrediting bodies in the United States. NECHE is a voluntary, non-profit, self-governing organization having as its primary purpose the accreditation of educational institutions. Through its evaluation activities the Commission provides public assurance about the educational quality of degree-granting institutions that seek or wish to maintain accreditation.

The Commission consists of faculty, administrators, and trustees from affiliated institutions and public members. It is served by a [staff](#) led by Dr. Lawrence M. Schall.

The Commission is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a reliable authority on the quality of education for the institutions it accredits. The Commission is also recognized by the [Council for Higher Education Accreditation](#) (CHEA), affirming that its Standards and processes are consistent with the quality, improvement, and accountability expectations that CHEA has established.

The seven accrediting bodies include:

The Western Region has two accreditors:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior colleges (ACCJC)

The WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC)

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)

New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE)

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC)

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)

## **2. Specialized Accreditation: Accreditation of Professional Schools and Individual Programs**

Specialized accreditation of certain professional schools and individual educational programs is granted by a number of national organizations, each representing a professional area such as business, law, engineering, or nursing. Though each of these organizations has its distinctive definitions of eligibility, criteria for accreditation, and operating procedures, accreditation by a specialized accrediting agency is one means of assuring quality of the accredited programs.

Specialized accreditors only examine a particular program and have no bearing on the quality of the institution as a whole.

## **3. State Licensure and Accreditation**

State licensure of programs authorizes institutions to offer them and state accreditation authorizes institutions to confer credentials in them. These requirements are outlined in the

General Statutes of Connecticut, Vol. 3, [Sec. 10a-34](#), Academic Degrees (formerly Sec. 10-330): Licensure or accreditation of programs of higher learning or institutions of higher education. For CSCU institutions, the Board of Regents for Higher Education is authorized by the State Department of Education to grant both licensure and accreditation to programs. Board resolutions for new programs grant licensure and accreditation simultaneously, with initial accreditation for 7 semesters, at which time programs can be submitted for continued accreditation.

All programs seeking licensure and accreditation, as well as continued accreditation, are brought by individual institutions to the Academic Council as action items. Proposals approved by AC then move to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee to the Board of Regents and then to the Board of Regents. Programs approved by the Board are then submitted to the Office of Higher Education where they receive an OHE#. At that point, institutions can offer the programs and award degrees in them.

Colleges and universities must apply for and receive approval from the Department of Education to participate in the Federal Student Aid (FSA) programs at the institutional level. In addition, individual programs must meet eligibility requirements in order for enrolled students to be eligible for federal financial aid. The Academic Council plays a critical role in maintaining program eligibility by advancing program-level state approvals and accreditation. Representatives should be sure to keep registrars and aid directors apprised and updated of proposals to the Academic Council and decisions to ensure federal compliance.

## **V. CSCU TRANSFER AND ARTICULATION POLICY (TAP) AND THE CONNECTICUT INDEPENDENT COLLEGE TRANSFER GUARANTEE**

The goal of the CSCU Transfer and Articulation Policy (TAP) is to simplify the transfer process for students. Through a system wide initiative, Associate of Arts TAP Degrees (Transfer Tickets) were created to align curriculum and student academic progress with that of a receiving four-year institution. With Transfer Tickets, students can pursue a single course of study and be assured that all their required credits for the associate degree will transfer to any one of the system's baccalaureate institutions. TAP was a catalyst in highlighting the complexity and inequity of transitioning from one campus to the next. As TAP evolves, students, faculty, and staff will encounter fewer barriers and more opportunities to succeed regardless of where credit was earned.

Starting in the Spring of 2020, the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) and the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges (CCIC) collaborated with the CSCU System Office to create the Connecticut Independent College Transfer Guarantee. Along with guaranteed admission and an application fee waiver, the CT Guarantee allowed participating independent institutions to align with Transfer Tickets. The agreement expands the number of options available for students while increasing transparency in making transfer decisions. This

collaboration is the first step in a continued effort to provide the greatest return on a student's time and effort for those planning on transferring to other institutions.

For additional information on TAP, see [CSCU Transfer and Articulation](#).

For additional information on the CT Guarantee, see [CT Guarantee](#).

## **VI. NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR STATE AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT (NC-SARA) REGULATIONS**

SARA pertains to approval of distance education courses and programs offered across state lines by postsecondary institutions that already have degree authorization in at least one state. SARA centralizes the authorization process for each institution in a single state called the institution's "Home State." Colleges or universities in a SARA state therefore only need their Home State authorization to offer distance education to students in any other SARA member state, subject to certain limitations. SARA is overseen by a National Council and administered by four regional education compacts. States may join SARA if they wish to do so; membership is voluntary. Likewise, if a state joins, its eligible institutions have the option of participating, but are not required to do so.

The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement is an agreement among member states, districts and territories that establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance education courses and programs. It is intended to make it easier for students to take online courses offered by postsecondary institutions based in another state. The benefits to colleges and universities are:

- Enables more efficient provision of distance education to a broader market
- Reduces number of other-state regulations to continually monitor and track
- Reduces number of applications and individual state requirements
- Reduces costs:
  - Applications, surety bonds, agent licenses, etc.
  - Staff (payroll and time)
  - Reduced costs = potentially lower fees for students

Two Step Process to join NC-SARA:

STEP 1.

### **State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement**

Connecticut has been accepted as a participant in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement, or SARA. SARA allows institutions offering distance education outside of their home state to enroll students under uniform procedures. SARA is managed via regional boards and a national council.

The Connecticut Office of Higher Education is the portal agency for administration of SARA in Connecticut and is responsible for the review of institutional applications and the resolution of out-of-state students' complaints against SARA institutions located in Connecticut.

### **Institutional Participation**

Participation in SARA is voluntary. Degree-granting institutions that are located and authorized to operate in Connecticut and are accredited by an entity recognized by the United States Department of Education may apply to the Office of Higher Education for approval to join. Approved Connecticut institutions are able to enroll students from other SARA states without having to seek approval from those states.

The institutional application must be completed and submitted to the Office of Higher Education along with the appropriate fee. A **separate fee** must also be remitted directly to the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements. The state fee for Connecticut institutions of higher education shall be calculated based upon the institution's full-time equivalent enrollment:

#### **State Fees (2021):**

FTE Count	Fee
<b>Up to 2,499</b>	\$3,000
<b>2,500 to 9,999</b>	\$6,000
<b>10,000 or more</b>	\$9,000

Applications will not be reviewed until the state fee has been paid. Checks should be made payable to "Treasurer, State of Connecticut." An approval to participate in SARA is valid for one year and must be renewed with the Office of Higher Education annually. Failure to abide by the terms in the institutional application may result in termination of an institution's ability to participate in SARA.

Prior to expiration of initial approval, institutions will be prompted to renew participation by the National Council. Renewal applications are available on the SARA website (below) and must be submitted to the Office of Higher Education with the appropriate annual fee described above. Once an application and state fee are submitted, the process for renewal follows the initial approval procedure. After review and approval by the Office of Higher Education, renewing institutions will receive notification and an invoice from the National Council. Renewal is complete upon notification by the National Council that an institution has been approved.

Initial application and renewal application forms may be found at the following link:  
<http://www.ctohe.org/SARA/Default.shtml>

STEP 2.

#### **NC-SARA Fees (2021):**

FTE Count	Fee
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<b>Under 2,500</b>	\$2,000
<b>2,500 to 9,999</b>	\$4,000
<b>10,000 or more</b>	\$6,000

These fees have been in place since SARA states began enrolling institutions in early 2014. NC-SARA's fees are reconsidered by NC-SARA every two years.

### Update on NC-SARA

### **Professional Licensure Notifications**

Two federal regulations that went into effect July 1, 2020 require disclosures by institutions regarding educational requirements for programs leading to professional licensure or certification regardless of modality. Institutions are required to make readily available to enrolled and prospective students whether programs leading to professional licensure or certification meet educational requirements. The regulation requires the following:

- A publicly available list of all States for which the institution's curriculum meets State educational requirements for professional licensure or certification
- A list of all States for which the institution's curriculum does not meet State educational requirements for professional licensure or certification
- A list of all States for which the institution has not made a determination of whether the curriculum meets educational requirements

A direct disclosure is required by the institution to the student in writing if the program leading to professional licensure or certification falls in one of the latter two categories above (the curriculum does not meet educational requirements, or the institution has not made a determination) for the state in which the student is located. In these two situations, the institution must inform the student directly of that status. This direct notification (typically by email or letter) must occur prior to the student's enrollment in the program or upon notification of a student's change of location to one of the impacted states.

Alternatively, for a student enrolled in the program, if the institution makes a later determination that the program does not meet educational requirements for licensure or certification in the state where the student is located, the institution must provide notice directly to the student within 14 calendar days of making the determination. The direct disclosures must be in writing. It is anticipated that this provision would happen most often when a program loses its approval in a state.

NC SARA houses and maintains a database resource of state regulatory agencies and state licensing boards that deal with state authorization: <https://www.nc-sara.org/professional-licensure-directory>

NC-SARA also maintain a resources site: <https://nc-sara.org/resources>

### **Staff Recommendations**

Direct NC-SARA staff to:

- Create and maintain a searchable database of academic programs available through distance education and offered by SARA institutions that voluntarily choose to list such programs in the database;
- Publicize the availability of the database;
- Include funding for related work in annual NC-SARA operating budgets; and,
- Collect, maintain, analyze data and periodically report to the Board on utilization of the database.

### **Spring Reporting for SARA Institutions**

In the spring, NC-SARA enrollment data reporting period runs from May – June. All SARA institutions are required to participate in enrollment reporting. A link to an institution-specific web form is sent to all active institution contacts usually in May.

The NC-SARA Manual may be found at the following link: <https://www.nc-sara.org/resources/guides>

### **NC-SARA Institutions in Connecticut**

Albertus Magnus College CT Private/non-profit  
**Asnuntuck Community College CT Public**  
**Capital Community College CT Public**  
**Central Connecticut State University CT Public**  
**Charter Oak State College CT Public**  
**Eastern Connecticut State University CT Public**  
Fairfield University CT Private/non-profit  
**Gateway Community College CT Public**  
Goodwin College CT Private/non-profit  
**Housatonic Community College**  
Hartford Seminary CT Private/non-profit  
Holy Apostles College and Seminary CT Private/non-profit  
Lincoln College of New England a CT Independent/for-profit  
**Middlesex Community College CT Public**  
**Naugatuck Valley Community College**  
**Northwestern Connecticut Community College CT Public**  
**Norwalk Community College CT Public**  
Post University CT Independent/for-profit  
**Quinebaug Community College CT Public**  
Quinnipiac University CT Private/non-profit  
Sacred Heart University CT Private/non-profit  
**Southern Connecticut State University CT Public**  
**Three Rivers Community College CT Public**  
**Tunxis Community College CT Public**  
University of Bridgeport CT Private/non-profit



University of Connecticut CT Public  
University of Hartford CT Private/non-profit  
University of New Haven CT Private/non-profit  
University of Saint Joseph CT Private/non-profit  
**Western Connecticut State University CT Public**  
Yale University CT Private/non-profit

### **CSCU Contact Information for the New England Board of Higher Education - N-SARA Regional Steering Committee:**

Ed Klonoski, President, Charter Oak State College  
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## **VII. OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) INITIATIVE**

Open Educational Resources (OER) is an academic priority for CSCU. The use of OER significantly reduces a cost barrier our students face, as well as enhances our faculty's academic freedom through the materials' open licensing.

#### **Definition**

“Open Educational Resources are teaching, learning and research materials in any medium – digital or otherwise – that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions.”

- Hewlett Foundation

#### **OER Advisory Council**

In December 2017, the CSCU OER Advisory Council was commissioned. It was formed by a call for volunteers and contains members from all 17 institutions with various roles represented (including but not limited to faculty, instructional support, library, IT, and administration).

#### **NoLo Course Catalog Designation**

The Connecticut State Colleges & University System encourages its institutions to prominently designate sections of courses whose course materials exclusively consist of no-cost (open or free textbooks) or low-cost course materials at the point of registration. In Banner, CSCC institutions currently have the ability to utilize a designation for those course sections with:

- **NoLo:** \$40 or under required costs

**This includes** all required instructional materials such as textbooks, websites, software programs, apps, courseware packages, access codes to homework websites, etc.

**This does not include:**

- **Tools and supplies**, such as a lab coat, lab manual, goggles, notebook paper, art materials, thumb drives, or calculators.
- **Course fees**, such as a lab fee, technology fee, testing fee, or eLearning fee.
- **Small copying/printing costs.** For example, if instructors expect students to have minor printing/copying expenses (for printing out worksheet drafts, assignments, etc.), this expense shouldn't be factored into the consideration.

These designations will use the following codes in Banner:

- **NOLO:** \$40 or under required costs

### **Definition: NoLo Designator**

The NoLo designator is for use with course sections that require instructional materials which cost students a total of \$40 or less per section. These materials may include open educational resources (OER), institutionally licensed campus library materials that all students enrolled in the course have access to use, and other materials that collectively don't exceed \$40 in costs.

**Important Note:** NoLo is not synonymous with OER. OER have an open license that permits revision and redistribution. NoLo also includes copyright-protected commercial/publisher materials that may have restrictive permissions on re-use and revision.

### **Guidelines**

Calculating your costs

To calculate your text-related costs for this designation, use the cost of new materials in your campus bookstore. While materials may be less expensive elsewhere, students using financial aid often must purchase materials from the bookstore, and while used prices might be lower, used purchasing can be complicated by limited supplies and edition changes. Contact your local bookstore for help with bookstore pricing.

Optional costs should not be included in your calculation.

For example: you provide students with a link to a free, online version of your materials but give them the option to purchase materials in print or point them to an optional homework help platform. The cost of the optional materials should not be included in your calculation. However, if the print version or homework platform is required in your class, you should include that cost in your calculation.

Only identify courses that meet these cost-cap requirements (\$40 or under).

By default, classes that do not meet one of this cost cap will not be designated. Students will have the ability to search for courses that meet the material cost cap in the schedule. If a course section has not identified all required materials, it should not be listed as NOLO until all required materials have been selected and calculated.

If a resource is used across multiple courses in a sequence, do not base your calculation on the cost divided by those courses.

For example, a text that costs \$120 that is required for three sequenced courses *does not* meet the \$40 or under label requirement. Not all students take all courses in a series, students may take courses over time and may have to pay for edition changes, and students would have to pay the full cost up-front and could not budget for three even payments.

If a course section has an associated lab section, they must be calculated together.

A combined cost for the required instructional materials from lecture and lab should be \$40 or less in order to be labeled as NOLO. This excludes the lab fee and the cost for any supplies or equipment needed for the lab section.

A lecture with lab may be coded separately only if they require separate registration with independent section numbers.

Note that lab manuals are currently excluded from the cost cap.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the cost cap for low-cost materials \$40?

CSCU set the \$40 cost cap by looking at peer institutions implementing course designators, but factors such as wages and inflation will be taken into account when looking at future adjustments.

Do these designators infringe on the academic freedom that faculty instructors have in order to choose what materials they use in the classroom?

No. No-cost/low-cost designators are a method of providing awareness and transparency to students when a course is using no-cost or low-cost materials. CSCU hopes that this increased visibility will lead some faculty to become more aware of no-cost and low-cost options, such as OER. For interested faculty, CSCU also offers a mini grant program to assist in the transition from traditional commercial resources to no-cost and low-cost options. However, faculty should continue to select the materials that best work for them and their students, in coordination with their department.

What if my text is available as an e-book through the library?

If your required text is available as a free-to-students e-book through the library, as long as you do not require students to purchase the printed text in your class, your course can qualify for the NoLo designation. Students may assume they must purchase the printed text if you mark a library-provided textbook as required. Consider listing the text as “optional” on the campus bookstore’s site and messaging students about their choices before the term begins.

What if the library has a print copy of the text?

These designators are largely intended to indicate free and open online access to materials, but there are a few scenarios where print resources at the library may meet the no-cost criteria. Err on the side of caution when designating a course with only physical copies of a text at the library. Will all students need to check out the material at the same time? If so, the library would need to have enough copies on hand to meet that need in order for the book to be considered no-cost to students. If the book will simply be referred to occasionally, or if only a small portion is required (and could therefore reasonably be photocopied), then perhaps one or two copies on reserve at the library will suffice. Please contact your local librarian to determine whether access to materials through the library – whether print or electronic – will work for your class.

What if I do not require any purchased texts or materials for my class?

Your course *can* qualify for the NoLo designation if no purchased materials or texts are required. For the purposes of this cost designation, it only matters if the collective costs of required course materials is \$40 or under.

What if I am unsure about the cost of my materials?

Consult your bookstore for guidance. If you are still unsure about whether your course meets the NoLo designation, *do not* ask your schedule-builder to designate your course as NoLo.

What if someone designated their course as having no-cost materials, but then the instructor for this section changed?

Please verify the use of no-cost materials with the new instructor and change this designator as soon as possible if needed. If the designator changes, please contact the students who have already registered for this course about the change, preferably with information about the new required materials.

What should I be doing?

- Administration
  - Raise awareness regarding this change within your institution, both for faculty reporting designations and for students registering for Summer 2019 courses through effective outreach channels.
- Faculty
  - Calculate the cost of text/publisher materials for your courses. Contact the bookstore for assistance with this step if needed. If your course meets the NoLo designation, either contact the person who enters scheduling information for your department into Banner to notify them, or wait for your department chair to ask for this information. If your course does not meet one of these designations, you do not need to change anything.
- Department Chairs and Deans
  - Work with your faculty and staff to develop processes to collect this information from faculty each term. Designate roles and responsibilities in this information collection process. Suggestions include using a shared form or spreadsheet to allow faculty to input their own information, therefore reducing the workload for all involved.
- Schedule Entry Assistants and Staff
  - Work with your faculty and chairs to develop processes to collect this information from faculty each term. Designate roles and responsibilities in this information collection process. Suggestions include using a shared form or spreadsheet to allow faculty to input their own information, therefore reducing the workload for all involved.

While we ask that you help to facilitate these processes to collect this information, **it is the responsibility of the faculty to communicate this NoLo designation** by the time the classes are to be built in Banner (or when registration begins, at the latest).

We hope you find this information helpful for your planning and implementation of the course material NoLo designation code.

“Cost Designators for Required Materials in USG Course Schedules” is provided under a [CC-BY 4.0 License](#).

Attribution to the Oregon Guidelines Document:

[“Designation FAQ,” Portland Community College, CC-BY 4.0.](#)